

Connecticut's School-To-Career System

What is School To Career?

A School-To-Career System is a comprehensive system of education that allows all students the opportunity to connect the learning in the classroom to the needs and demands of higher education and the workplace. Every School To Career system must contain three core elements known as school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities as well as be organized around industry-developed career clusters. School-To-Career Systems show students (from elementary school through postsecondary education) how school-based academic knowledge applies to life outside the classroom and how it links to a variety of career paths.

What is Connecticut's Vision?

Today's global technology-driven marketplace demands that all high school graduates have basic academic knowledge, workplace skills and technical training. It requires a new kind of worker—one who excels at thinking critically, working in teams, solving and learning continually. Education needs to play a part in creating a new vision for the future. Schools and businesses must work together in preparing students for their future careers and roles in the workplace.

Connecticut Learns provides all students in the state with the opportunity to connect the learning that takes place within the school walls to the needs and demands of higher education and of the full range of careers offered by the Connecticut economy.

The goal of Connecticut's School-To-Career System is to develop a comprehensive K-16 system of school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities that leads to the attainment of a *Connecticut Career Certificate*, which is a portable credential that attests to mastery of employer-identified academic, employability and technical skills within one of eight career clusters.

What are the Elements of School To Career?

School-based learning is classroom instruction based on high academics and occupational skill standards. It is learning that relates academic subjects to the world of work.

Work-based learning is learning that takes place in the workplace. Work-based learning will vary from short-term, introductory types of experiences to long-term, more intensive workplace preparation.

Connecting activities are ways in which education and business work together which include activities that integrate school-based and work-based learning.

What are Connecticut's Career Clusters?

Connecticut's School-To-Career System is organized around eight industry-developed career clusters. Students participating in these programs will select a cluster by the end of 10th grade. The eight career clusters are:

- ✧ **Arts and Media**
- ✧ **Business and Finance**
- ✧ **Construction: Technologies and Design**
- ✧ **Environmental, Natural Resources and Agriculture**
- ✧ **Government, Education and Human Services**
- ✧ **Health and Biosciences**
- ✧ **Retail, Tourism, Recreation and Entrepreneurship**
- ✧ **Technologies: Manufacturing, Communications and Repair**

Note: An Education Cluster was recently added. Now there are nine clusters.

Arts and Media

Contact: Judith Andrews at (860) 713-6766

This career cluster includes jobs performing in theater, dance and music, and behind-the-scenes jobs such as set design, set lighting and camera work. It also includes the visual arts, such as painting and sculpture, and the management of theaters, museums, art galleries and concert spaces, both classical and popular. Also in this cluster are jobs in radio, television, films, newspapers and magazines (for example, announcing, acting, filming, producing, writing, editing and reporting). Advertising is part of this cluster, as are jobs in commercial art, design and photography.

Business and Finance

Contact: Lee Marcoux at (860) 713-6768

There are still many jobs in "offices" in Connecticut, despite the fact that banks and insurance companies are restructuring the way they use their work forces. There are jobs for graduates with accounting backgrounds, for employees who can manage both people and money, and for others who can make business decisions on developing and selling products and services. All offices depend upon well-trained administrative support staff people, who need to know how to use computers, fax machines and other business and office equipment.

Construction: Technologies and Design

Contact: Greg Kane at (860) 713-6756

The design and construction of homes, buildings, bridges and roads is a major category of jobs in the Connecticut economy. Some knowledge of the whole industry is a cornerstone for people who are interested in a range of different jobs — buying and developing land, designing or building projects, and so on.

Environmental, Natural Resources and Agriculture

Contact: Greg Kane at (860) 713-6756

This cluster includes jobs in which workers improve the indoor and outdoor environment, reduce waste and byproducts, manage forests and land, produce food from the land and sea, and nurture animals. Workers with the skills to monitor air, water and land quality and control environmental risks are in demand.

Government, Education and Human Services

Contact: Lee Marcoux at (860) 713-6768

This cluster includes teachers at any level, educational administrators, political officeholders, government service workers, social workers, psychologists, librarians, public safety workers (police and fire) and legal professionals.

Health and Biosciences

Contact: Lee Marcoux at (860) 713-6768

The Health and Biosciences cluster embraces careers in a wide range of health-care settings, such as hospitals, medical laboratories, and medical and dental practices. It also includes industries involved in researching and manufacturing drugs and other medical products, including those involved in the fast-changing biotechnology/biomedical field.

Retail, Tourism, Recreation and Entrepreneurship

Contact: Stephen Hoag (860) 713-6764

The Connecticut economy offers many jobs in retail stores, restaurants, hotels and motels, tourist attractions and recreational facilities. These businesses are where many young people get their first jobs - often earning the minimum wage. The opportunity to earn better salaries with benefits, and to build a career, usually requires getting into management and operations positions. Some retail companies have management training programs that will accept high school graduates, but college programs in marketing and business are a more expedient route. Many "fast food" companies have management training programs, while rising to become a chef in one of the state's many restaurants usually requires being trained in a culinary institute.

Technologies: Manufacturing, Communications and Repair

Contact: Greg Kane (860) 713-6756

This cluster represents a broad range of industries that need employees with a technical background. Included are technical jobs in manufacturing, the electric utilities, and the telephone and cable companies. This cluster also includes jobs in companies that repair automobiles, airplanes, computers and other technical products, as well as companies that develop computer software.

How can a school system learn more about school to career? For further information, contact Judith Andrews at (860) 713-6766.